

NSPG re LEBANON
TALKING POINTS
3 September 1983

LAF has performed better than expected in Muslim West Beirut. It has now moved into Christian East Beirut. This is a symbolic plus. The Phalange forces have thus far accepted them without resistance. However, real crunch is probably yet to come.

Prospects for factional violence remain high. The Army probably will not be able to operate successfully in both West Beirut and the Shuf-Alayh region.

- Most of the Muslim fighters in Beirut apparently eluded the Army sweeps, and many are eager to resume attacks against Army units.
- If heavy street fighting breaks out, the Druze fighters probably will resume shelling Beirut.
- The risk of more MNF casualties is high. Druze and Shia fighters believe US played significant role in Lebanese Army operations this week.

In the absence of an agreement, Gemayel's position now depends largely on the Army's performance and cohesion.

Some Shia soldiers have deserted the Lebanese Army earlier this week to join the Shia Amal militia. So far the numbers are quite small but continuing Army moves against Muslim fighters in Beirut, and eventually in the Shuf region, will further test loyalties of the Army's Muslim troops.

SECRET

25X1

[REDACTED]

We can expect increased Syrian efforts to complicate Gemayel's problems. They are likely to provide increased support to the Druze militia and press Shia and other pro-Syrian militias in Beirut to divert the Lebanese Army with renewed fighting in the city. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We can expect increased artillery fire on MNF forces from areas which are under Syrian control. We will know where the fire comes from and who could stop it even if we don't know who pulled the trigger.

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Gemayel may have to make a decision whether to take the risk of having the LAF involve itself deeply in the Shuf or concentrate on holding West Beirut and merely maintaining a symbolic presence to the south on the basis that if he doesn't have the city he doesn't have anything.